

The promise of multi-modal analysis in sensemaking and CCO



“[Discourse] may take a variety of forms, including written documents, verbal reports, artwork, spoken words, pictures, symbols, buildings, and other artifacts” (Phillips et al. 2004: 636)

→ yet we rarely look at these other modalities (means of communication and meaning making) outside of conversations and texts

“social–organizational becoming does not depend solely on the linguistic in terms of its organization and communication, but on the ongoing negotiation of intelligibility in virtually any domain: gesture, posture, software design, tool manipulation, spatial placing and so forth” (Iedema, 2007: 937).

→ but analyses often restricted to one or two modalities, and does not systematically address the relationship between them in any given setting

Multi-modality at micro level of analysis (in communicative interactions)

- Gesture
- Gaze
- Body posturing (including shoulder shrugs)
- Props (creation and manipulation of artifacts)

Analysing *the relationship* between them is key (*multi-modality*)

“gesticulation arises as an integral part of an individual's *communicative* effort and....has a direct role to play in this process” (Kendon, 1983: 27).

Gesture is an integral component of communication in this view, not merely an accompaniment or ornament. Such gestures are synchronous and co-expressive with speech, not redundant, and are frequent—about 90% of spoken utterances in natural discourse are accompanied by them.

McNeill (2005) conceptualizes the synchrony of speech forms and gestures as the basis for an imagery-language dialectic.

Sensemaking

Umbrella construct for meaning making within organizations

- Cognitive and behavioral psychology
- Discourse and narrative turn


→ abstracts sensemaking away from its material context

→ focus on symbols alone, as opposed to processes of meaning making in human communication (including multi-modality)

Case example – Cornelissen, Mantere & Vaara (2014, JMS)



**Rucksack left at Shepherds Bush Station
Scene 8**



A rucksack left at Shepherds Bush was found to contain a membership card in the name of Hussain OSMAN. The card related to membership of London South Bank Club (a gym)
124 WANDSWORTH ROAD LONDON SW8 2LD.
Officers attended the club and obtained details of the membership, which showed it was a dual membership.

Details of membership obtained relate to joint membership
Hussain OSMAN
DOB 23/07/1978
21 SCOTIA ROAD
SW2 2UF
Home phone on form shown as T02086781792 (Details taken from membership form)
Mobile 07946 432308 (Details taken from membership form)

Photograph of Mr Hussain Osman

CCO

Communication constitutes organization, and generates reality of organizational life (culture, power, routines, coordination, networks)

→ initial focus on conversations/speech and texts

→ turn towards sites, objects, and bodies as part of communication (Ashcraft et al., 2009, AMA)

“emergent displays...integrate the bodies of the participants into the production of talk, and are important constitutive features of the conversation” (Goodwin, 1981: 125).

Multi-facetedness of human communication

→ example: use of head tilts and shoulder shrugs in stance-taking (Debras & Cienki, 2012)